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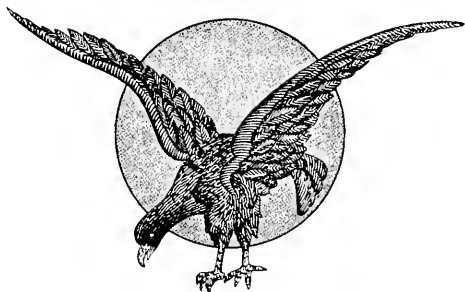


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S. S. U. 503 Association  
November, 1920





S. S. U. 503



—OF—

The U. S. Army Ambulance Service  
With The French Army



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The Emblem of Section 503 was designed by Private DeForest L. Egner and adopted by the Section in April, 1918, in the Champagne Sector of the Marne Battlefield.

The Emblem of Section 503 consisted of a black eagle with outstretched wings, rising against a background of a blood-red setting sun, on a white oblong field. In each of the lower corners of the field is a blue star.

In the Emblem of Section 503, the setting sun signifies the waning military strength of the Allies; the rising eagle, the increasing strength of America coming into action, and the two stars, the combined French and American Service, the dual Service of Section 503.



“Lest We Forget”

A HISTORY

OF

SECTION 503

OF

The U. S. Army Ambulance Service  
with the French Army

By the Committee on History  
of the S. S. U. 503 Association



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DOUGLAS J. McHENRY, Assistant Editor

FRANCIS F. BODINE, Historian





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Sergeant James G. Mackey

Corporal George G. Allison

Barron, Alexander M.

Bates, C. Sheldon

Bodine, Francis F.

Boyle, Hugh A.

Brown, James R.

Brown, William J.

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Don, Edward

Dougherty, Joseph L.

Egner, DeForest L.

Flindt, Walter

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Hayes, Fullwood P.

Hayes, Herbert W.

Hill, James D.

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Joachim, Edward E.

Jones, Frederick

Luquet, Emil F.

McHenry, Douglas J.

McKenna, John

Marshall, Robert

Martin, Alex. M., Jr.

Martin, Geo. W., Jr.

Myatt, Cecil

Smith, Jasper T.

Sharman, Frederick T.

Treanor, Robert

Turner, Robert W.

Weaver, Ira I.

Weidler, Raymond R.

Winkler, Charles

Younger, Albert W.





SS U. 503 U.S. ARMY AMBULANCE SERVICE

AMPHIGH



## Former Members

Balthis, Philip	-	-	-	-	-	-	S. S. U. 649
Bodenhorn, Lloyd	-	-	-	-	-	-	S. S. U. 517
Bocknofsky, Solomon	-	-	-	-	-	-	S. S. U. 517
Casto, Rex	-	-	-	-	-	-	- Paris
Floro, Louis	-	-	-	-	-	-	S. S. U. 517
Oehring, Fred	-	-	-	-	-	-	- Paris
Van Sciver, Joseph	-	-	-	-	-	-	- Paris
Heilman, Emerson	-	-	-	-	-	-	Discharged



## **Distinguished in Action**

### **Champagne Sector**

Mackey, Sergeant James G.  
Allison, Corporal George G.  
Barron, Private Alexander M.  
Bates, Private C. Sheldon  
Don, Private Edward  
Flindt, Private Walter  
Weaver, Private Ira I.

### **Oise-Aisne Sector**

Bodine, Private Francis F.  
Boyle, Private Hugh A.  
Brown, Private James R.  
Dougherty, Private Joseph L.  
Egner, Private DeForest L.  
Younger, Private Albert W.



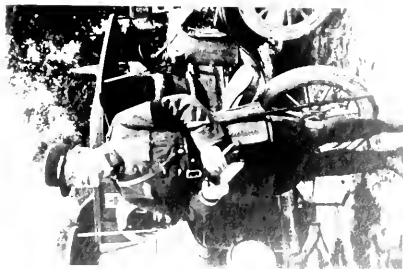




LIEUT. LARS S POTTER



LIEUT. J W GARDAM



LIEUT. J W GARDAM



## “To Arms”

The Exhortation before the battle of the Champagne of July, 1918, to the soldiers of the Fourth French Army, by General Gouraud, who foresaw, with remarkable clarity of vision, the vastness of the coming struggle.

\* \* \* \* \*

le II. July, 1918.

### ORDER

To the French and American Soldiers of the Fourth Army:

We may be attacked at any moment. You know that never will a defensive battle be fought under more favorable circumstances. We are forewarned and we are on guard. We are powerfully re-inforced with Infantry and Artillery.

You will fight on ground which by your continuous work has been transformed into a formidable fortress—a fortress invincible if all the passages are well guarded.

The bombardment will be severe, with clouds of dust and smoke and gas, but your position and your armament are formidable.

In your breasts the courageous and strong hearts of brave men beat.

No one will look behind, no one will give way. There will be but one thought—to kill a great many until they have had enough and that is why your General says to you, “You will break down this assault and it will be a great day.”



GRAND QUARTIER GENERAL  
des Armées  
du Nord et du Nord-Est

ETAT-MAJOR

BUREAU DU PERSONNEL  
(Decorations)

ORDRE No. 10,887 "D." (Extrait)

---

Après approbation du Général Commandant en Chef les Forces  
expédionnaires Américaines en France, le General Commandant en  
Chef les Armées Françaises du Nord et du Nord-Est, cite à l'Ordre  
de la DIVISION:

---

SECTION SANITAIRE AMERICAINE 503:

"Sous les ordres du Lieutenant Americain Lars  
POTTER et du Sous-Lieutenant J. JOURDAN de la  
PASSARDIERE, a, pendant l'attaque du 15 au 18 Juillet  
1918, assure avec la plus grande bravoure et un mepris  
absolu du danger dans des circonstances particulierement  
difficiles, l'evacuation des blesses de la Division, donnant  
des preuves d'un inlassable courage et d'un remarquable  
esprit de Corps."

---

Au Grand Quartier General, le 25 Octobre 1918.

POUR EXTRAIT CONFORME:  
Le Lieutenant-Colonel,  
Chef du Bureau du Personnel,

Le Général Commandant en Chef,

Signe: PETAIN.



**“Lest We Forget”**







**S**HORTLY after the declaration of war on Germany by the government of the United States there arrived in America a French High Commission. According to divers accounts, this Commission had stated that the French military forces were urgently in need of ambulance trains, and an immediate organization of an Ambulance Service would be one of the speediest and most effective forms of assistance America could render the Allies. A few weeks later a call for volunteers for an Ambulance Service was issued by officers appointed to organize such a Service, temporary headquarters being established at Cooper Battalion Hall, Philadelphia.

The site selected by the government for a camp for the Service was the Fair Grounds at Allentown, Pennsylvania. Allentown is a small city on the banks of the Lehigh river; a flourishing industrial centre, populated for the most part by the thrifty Pennsylvania Germans. Besides many industries, the city contained a University, a number of colleges, and the Fair Grounds where each year were held the celebrated Allentown Fairs. These grounds were located on the edge of the city and made an ideal place for a military camp. Several large exhibition buildings gave promise of an easy transformation into barracks. The large brick grandstand had a large area beneath the seats which could be utilized as a mess hall, while the race track was a natural drill ground.

During the first week of June groups of recruits began to reach the camp. From north and south, east and west, came these bands of youths still clad in civilian clothes, having forsaken the colleges and universities, the farms and the workshops and the business offices; throwing away their books, casting aside their hoes and their tools, closing their ledgers and removing the trusty pens from their ears—all in one mad rush for military glory. Third among these groups to arrive in camp was Section 3, composed largely of Philadelphia boys.

Almost immediately upon the arrival of the Section in camp there commenced that important phase of military life known as "details." "Details" is a military term applied to every form of labor imaginable. Like the Biblical "Charity" its interpretation is far reaching. There were kitchen details, sanitary details, ditch-digging details, and other details, far too numerous to record.

## “LEST WE FORGET”

Practically the first detail of Section 3 was the task of transforming the former exhibition buildings into habitable barracks. The fruit and vegetable stands, the pigeon and dove cotes, the well bedded stables of full-blooded stock, and the soiled and heavily perfumed quarters of pedigreed swine were soon to become the homes of aspiring young ambulance drivers, and had to be thoroughly cleansed. So the Section, along with other Sections, cleaned up the camp.

Later on, as the Service developed into a thorough military organization, the Section became officially designated as Section 503. Regular drill hours were established and an officer, Major Floyd, was appointed in charge of the Section temporarily. George W. Martin became sergeant first-class with Abram Cook as corporal. For duty sergeant there was appointed John E. Scalley, a person of somewhat large physical proportions, with a deliberate and mature air, and a tinge of humor, indicative of Irish ancestry. Sergeant Scalley, on account of certain physical advantages over the average-sized man, could not at first obtain a complete issue of uniform and thusly was enabled to forego drills for a time.

After the issue of uniforms, Lieutenant Lane was in charge of the temporary Battalion of which Section 503 was a unit. Before this, however, the Section was assembled early one morning for exercises when there strolled up a youthful looking chap whom Shakespeare might have styled, “yon beardless youth.” Indeed, the frank boyishness of his countenance seemed rather incongruous with the impression of dignity conveyed by the silver bar on his shoulder. Addressing the Section he informed them he was the newly appointed Section commander. So entered into the career of Section 503, 1st Lieutenant Joseph William Gardam.

In July Captain Ward Brinton replaced Lieutenant Lane as commander of the Battalion which now had become a permanent unit known as Battalion 19. Section 503 was senior Section of, and Lieutenant Gardam senior lieutenant in, the Battalion. Then, on July 18th, a day after the personnel of the Battalion had received its second inoculation for typhoid fever, Captain Brinton started with his Battalion and one other for the Battlefield of Gettysburg.

About eleven in the morning the hike commenced. On the first day, approximately six miles were covered by actual marching; then the two Battalions were loaded in a train of ambulances, which had followed the column, and were carried to Reading. The end of the second day's march brought the column to Lancaster; the third to York; and the fourth,

## “LEST WE FORGET”

Gettysburg. There camp was made, the shelter tents being pitched on the Battlefield in the vicinity of the “Bloody Angle” on the Union side of the field.

The Battalions were allowed three days of rest and an opportunity was given to explore the historic fields. Then, on the morning of the 26th, camp was broken, and the return journey begun. At York a most enthusiastic reception was accorded the Ambulance Sections by the officials and citizens of that city.

After the return to Allentown, Battalion 19 was placed in the Second Overseas Contingent under the command of Major J. R. Devereaux. Section 503 was then quartered in the pigpens. The preparation for an immediate departure was feverishly and energetically begun. Overseas equipment was issued; the personnel of the Section was increased from thirty-six to forty-five men; and another sergeant was appointed in each Section, Private James G. Mackey receiving the appointment in 503; the Section property was packed in boxes, unpacked and repacked again; and several parades and inspections were held by the Colonel of the Service and Major Devereaux.

It was just about this time that “Old General Rumor,” that bugbear of all military organizations, began to manifest his presence in a mighty fashion. “General Rumor” is the Supreme Being of the army, the commander-in-chief so to speak, for all men, from the highest officer to the most stubborn buck private, bow to his authority and are his victims. There was no definite or reliable information as to the future movements of the Contingent, thanks to the “General.” Many times daily, reports reached the Section, varying in contents from, “the departure of the Contingent tonight,” to “sailing orders have been cancelled and the Contingent won’t leave camp before spring.” A careless word by an officer at mess was liable to throw the entire Contingent into paroxysms of wild rejoicing, or extreme despair, according to the moods and ability of “General Rumor’s orderlies” who were circulating this “inside dope.”

However, the Second Overseas Contingent was supposed to sail about the first of September, but the departure was indefinitely postponed. So Battalions 19 and 20 went on another hike, this time to Mauch Chunk. The first day’s march brought the Battalions to Palmerton, a small village. On entering this village it was learned that the citizens desired to honor the Battalion commander by inviting him to parade his command through the town. Nothing loath, the Captain, who had a weakness for parades,

## “LEST WE FORGET”

consented, feeling, on his part, that he was honoring the citizens. Consequently, because these two important factors, the Battalion commander and the citizens, mutually desired to honor each other, the parade was held, although from the viewpoint of the buck private the honor was of dubious aspect; at least as far as the latter was concerned.

Footsore and weary the men “slung packs” and in accompaniment to the tune of an antiquated brass band, the parade commenced. Guided by a rustic individual who knew his town thoroughly, the column marched up and down every street and over Main Street twice for good measure. Every time the village school house and other public buildings, which boasted a flag-pole were passed, the Captain tersely ordered “eyes right!” and stiffly saluted. Finally, the town having been thoroughly scoured, the citizens appeased, and the Battalion commander convinced there were no more flag-poles to salute, the Battalions were marched to a park where camp was established.

The following morning the hike was resumed and Mauch Chunk was reached early in the afternoon. A camp was maintained for a few days outside of the town along the old Switchback. The Battalions were then recalled to Allentown and sent to Betzwood, where the entire Overseas Contingent had established a temporary camp on the bank of the Schuylkill, a few miles from Valley Forge. It was there that Captain Brinton attempted to have a “right by ambulance” drill, but after an hour’s exhibition of some of the wildest driving ever seen, he decided to abandon his efforts along that line and return to the less dangerous “right by fours.”

On the return to Allentown from Betzwood, Section 503, with the other units of Battalion 19, was transferred to the Third Overseas Contingent which was commanded by Major Francis T. Metcalfe. Captain Brinton then left Battalion 19. On the last day of October, the Third Overseas left the camp, marched out into the country for five miles, and established the renowned “Guth Station” camp. This camp consisted mainly of dug-outs, constructed by the men, and it was not long before Guth Station assumed the general aspect of a sector of the Western Front. “Guth’s” was the first of its kind in the United States; photographs of the camp were published in many of the leading periodicals of the country, and large crowds visited it weekly.

Lieutenant Morton, later Captain Morton, was in command of Battalion 19, replacing Captain Brinton. On reaching the camp site at Guth Station, the Section pitched its tents on a field covered with weeds and mud. In

## “LEST WE FORGET”

a few days the weeds had been trampled away, but the mud remained, to the detriment of personal comfort. Later on several of the Sections occupying dugouts, left the place, 503 moved into the vacated quarters and existed in a little better fashion.

There is much to be said of Guth Station, much that will never be forgotten by those who spent November of 1917 there. Probably the most noted feature was the stretcher-bearing and first-aid drills. Every morning all men who were not on detail reported for drill. They were divided into three lots. One set was the wounded, another the sanitary squad, and the third the stretcher-bearers. The officers, naturally, were the doctors. A field hospital was placed on one spot; some distance up the road the ambulances were stationed; and beyond over the hill, was the regimental dressing station.

The wounded, all of whom were tagged with various wounds supposedly theirs, were taken out and scattered over the fields, behind rocks, in holes, and under the brush in every position grotesque and picturesque, according to the imagination of the officer arranging the “stage.” Then the sanitary men were sent out in small groups to locate the wounded, render first-aid treatment, and carry them in to the regimental dressing station. There, after the doctors had fought over the case till the patient would have died, had he been actually wounded, the stretcher-bearers placed him on a stretcher and carried him to the ambulances.

Now, due to the wise and careful selection of the various groups at the commencement of the drill, it not infrequently happened that a six-foot heavyweight was the patient, while four medium-sized unfortunates were the stretcher-bearers. As the scene of this vast manoeuvre was a rugged, stony spot covered by undergrowth and marked with little valleys and hills, the task of the stretcher-bearers was not an easy one. Although the patient was perfectly willing to walk over the worse portions of the route, disliking to lie at ease on the stretcher and listen to the muttered curses of the bearers, and run the risk of being dumped over into the mud, yet was he prevented from so doing because of the fact that certain of the officers, neglecting their medical duties, kept an eye on the stretchers for the explicit purpose of preventing any such infractions of the drill regulations. When the stretchers reached the ambulance station, they were loaded in the ambulances and carried to the field hospital. There, after a brief inspection, the erstwhile patients were unceremoniously dumped on the ground and ordered to report back to their camp.

## “LEST WE FORGET”

The Guth Station camp was broken on December 8th, and the Sections returned to Allentown, marching in through a blinding snowstorm. One of the new barracks was assigned to 503, which, however, was not much of an improvement over Guth Station, as it had neither heat nor light for a time. Two weeks later a quarantine was placed on the Third Overseas Contingent. As the country was then in the grip of a fierce, icy winter, with an abundance of snow, the restrictions of the camp were not as great a hardship as it would have been in fairer weather. The deprivation of the amusements of Allentown rendered the confinement a little irksome but this monotony was partly relieved by camp details during the day and entertainments at the “Y” hut at night. Also there were various methods of slipping through the quarantine and many of the men surreptitiously left camp for a night’s frolic in town.

All along, as during the latter part of the summer, “Old General Rumor” was especially active. The placing of the quarantine and the cancelling of the ten-day Christmas passes had given the rumors an authentic aspect. On the other hand forty-eight hour passes were issued at Christmas; New Year’s Day arrived with no indication of departure; and on Friday, the 4th of January, Section 503 went on guard with fatigue duty two days later. All these latter events seemed to belie the auspicious indications.

Finally on Tuesday, January 8th, all the Sections of the Contingent were recalled to their barracks and ordered to pack. Joyously this was done. At two o’clock the next morning the Third Overseas left Allentown, after a midnight lunch in the mess hall and a silent trip through the deserted, snow-covered streets of the city. As the train slowly moved away from the station the minds of the fellows turned to the city they were leaving. No more would they stroll down Hamilton Street to the Philadelphia restaurant, or the movies; no more would they pass away Sunday afternoons with fair companions in Central Park; no more nocturnal frolics in Emaus; no more, for many a day, would these lads enjoy such gay times as those just past. The carefree, easy life was to give place to the grim realities of actual warfare; war stripped of all its camouflage; war horrible and dreary and monotonous, with long nights of ceaseless driving, days spent in bare, desolate trenches; possibly bringing glory and honor to some, glory and eternal sleep to others, but to none the light and careless times in Allentown.

The Contingent reached Jersey City on the morning of the ninth at

## “LEST WE FORGET”

seven o'clock. Ferries carried the unit across the river to New York and before noon it had embarked on the Cunard liner, "Carmania." The "Carmania" sailed that afternoon at five o'clock, reaching Halifax a day later. There the transport joined with several other ships, forming a convoy, and sailed, being escorted by an American destroyer.

As far as Section 503 was concerned the journey across the ocean was uneventful. The time on shipboard was taken up with life-boat drills, lectures, and verbal combats with English stewards. Once the "Carmania" nearly collided with a sister ship of the convoy. Another time a submarine was reported as being in the vicinity, but that may have been one of "General Rumor's official communiques," for the convoy was not molested. Off the coast of Ireland a group of sub-chasers met the convoy. The "Carmania" reached Liverpool on the night of January 23rd, docking the next morning.

Disembarking at ten in the morning, the Contingent entrained and journeyed to Winchester, Hampshire County. There the journey ended for the time, the destination being at Morn Hill Camp, a British rest camp about three miles outside the city. Ten days were spent among the Tommies and their incessant jam and tea. Then a short and swift journey to Southampton and a long wait on the pier there. Several of the men of Section 503 discovered, and managed to purloin a few bottles of what the original Americans called "fire-water," while waiting for the boat. After an interminable delay, Battalion 19 went aboard a small steamer, the "Ceasarea," which safely transported the unit to La Havre, France. Another British rest camp, more jam and tea, and then the Battalion was loaded on cars, waybilled as "cattle" and freighted to St. Nazaire.

St. Nazaire!—that wonderful, home-like camp which was a veritable sea of mud with barracks from a distance appearing to be little groups of islands in the center of it. Section 503 reached the camp during the morning amidst a drizzling rain. A barracks was assigned but on closer inspection seemed more for the purpose of straining rain water than sheltering human beings. As it was performing its task diligently and consistently, another building was secured which was a slight improvement over the first.

Section 503 spent five long weeks in the camp at St. Nazaire. Having come to France purely for the altruistic motive of assisting the French to win the war by driving ambulances gloriously over shell-torn roads, the Section soon learned that the immediate outlook on life consisted of

## “LEST WE FORGET”

road mending, ditch digging, and stevedore work under the solicitous guidance of buck privates who wore the insignia of the Engineers' Corps.

At one time Section 503 was assigned to a train of Ford ambulances with which they were to make a trial trip. Early on a cool morning the Section marched down to the cars. The machines were to be warmed up and ready to start on the arrival of the Major. But the Fords were in an obstinate mood that morning. Evidently they disliked stirring on a cool morning as does the average soldier. When the venerable Major appeared only a few of them had been moved from their original places. The Major then decided to postpone the trip for twenty-four hours, rightly believing, judging by appearances, that the drivers would need about that amount of time in which to finally have the machines started.

Late in the morning of the following day the ambulance train was lined up and ready for the journey. The Major assembled the Section and issued a long list of instructions which he ordered observed closely. The men followed closely as he spoke, as is advisable when a major speaks, and they earnestly meant to obey him. But they reckoned without their Fords. The convoy started with some semblance of order; a short time later, however, only a straggling, scattered line of ambulances was traveling towards the destination, the drivers frantically endeavoring to stick together and yet observe the Major's multitudinous instructions.

The journey ended in the little village of Guerande, where the machines were parked in the public square before an ancient gateway and walls, enclosing a portion of the town which dates back to the time of Charlemagne. The Major was in a furious mood. Calling the Section to attention, he soundly berated them for the style of driving exhibited, saying that the drivers handled their cars like "Barney Oldfields," and terminating his lecture by likening 503 to a "bunch of bandits." Due, perhaps, to these severe criticisms, the trip back to the camp was a slight improvement; nevertheless another Section was assigned to the train of ambulances, and 503 returned to the task of repairing roads and barracks in St. Nazaire.

During the stay in St. Nazaire, several changes were made in the personnel of the Section. Corporal Cook was replaced by Private George Allison. Mechanics Castro, Oehring, Van Sciver, and Balthis were ordered to the Ambulance Garage in Paris, being permanently transferred. On March 16th, the Section left St. Nazaire, again travelling as human cattle. A few days before the departure, Private Robert W. Turner was stricken with acute appendicitis, which necessitated his removal to a hospital.



## "LEST WE FORGET"

On St. Patrick's Day, 503 reached Ferrieres-en-Gatinais, a small village sixty kilometers from Paris. Ferrieres-en-Gatinais was a village of ancient renown because of the church and the monastery which looked down on it from the crest of a hill. According to the traditions of the place, early generations of the royal family of France were wont to visit this monastery to witness, and occasionally to participate in, various games and tournaments which were held there in the courtyard. But all this glory was past; the monks had long since departed, and those corridors and stone-flagged chambers which once echoed with the soft patter of their bare feet now rang with the hard clash of hobnailed shoes on the feet of huge warriors from over the seas. For the monastery, and its surrounding grounds, was the newly established Base Camp of the United States Army Ambulance Service.

A day or two before leaving the camp, the Section was assembled to hear a lecture by an erstwhile enlisted man who had all the earmarks of a genuine "bull artist." This individual, who wore the bars of a first lieutenant, had seen several months' duty at the front as an ambulance driver. He had returned to Base Camp solely for the purpose, to judge from his talk, of preparing the raw recruits for the conditions at the front. The lecture was interesting, if partly fictitious, and a wonderful masterpiece of oratory. As an accurate rendition of existing facts the discourse was a rank failure. Being somewhat exaggerated, perhaps, and highly colorful, the tale gave proof of being the offspring of a mind under the control of an intensely active and well exercised imagination. But the lecturer acquainted 503 with one excellent idea, "System D," which Lieutenant Gardam took up and later developed wonderfully.

On Saturday morning, before daylight, 503 arose, breakfasted, and marched down to the French equivalent of a railroad station. After the usual long wait, a train came along and stopped to take on the Section. This train was made up of first class coaches, a new feature in the traveling experience of the Section. During the journey to Paris, a little game of some thing or other was indulged in, to pass the time away. French coins with holes in the center, were the medium of exchange used and when the destination was reached the winner of the game paraded up the platform of the "Gare d'Orleans" with his fortune strung on a cord, to the excitement of the Parisiens in the station. But the Parisiens were already frantic; in fact a Parisien would not be a true citizen of his city were he not in a state of excitement continually. This day was the twenty-third of March and Section 503 entered Paris amidst what appeared to be a

## “LEST WE FORGET”

daylight aerial raid. The city was quite perturbed by the mystery of this unusual occurrence and it was not till later in the day that the newspapers gave out the information that the Germans were shelling the city with a long range gun.

When Section 503 reached the Ambulance Garage, there lined up was a train of twenty Ford ambulances, one Ford touring car, and one Ford truck, while in the mess hall of the Garage, a bounteous dinner was waiting. The dinner was disposed of first; then each fellow sat for his photograph which was to adorn both his personal identification card and that section of the Army Records office which is the counterpart of an American police rogues gallery. This process over with, the Section went out to the ambulances and drivers were assigned to them.

The Section received orders to drive the train of cars to Versailles the next morning, which was Palm Sunday, the twenty-fourth. Saturday night was free to the fellows who naturally set out to take in the sights as much as possible in the really short hours of liberty allotted them. As 503 consisted of a bunch of lads of highly diversified tastes and fancies, the sights taken in were too widely varied to record. “L’alerte,” a signal for an aerial attack, sounded at eight o’clock, but it would have taken far more than the dangers of a German bomb to have prised the lads of 503 from their amusement that night. In the morning, however, every one had turned up, so Lieutenant Gardam managed to get the ambulance train to Versailles, in spite of Private Weaver’s repeated practice of leading the latter half of the convoy on a wild goose chase along the boulevards of Paris.

At Versailles Section 503 went under the orders of the French Army, and the official designation and military address of it was:

S. S. U. 503, Convois Automobiles, Par B. C. M.

There, too, the ambulances and cars were stencilled with the name of the Section, and as 503 gazed on its own title so prominently displayed on their own train of cars, the breast of every lad swelled to the fullest limit of his O. D. blouse. “Their own ambulance train at last!” For this they had endured the drills and the wearisome routine of Allentown, the hardships of the trip from America, the laborious work at St. Nazaire; after all this the scene was to change at last. Amidst shell and bomb in war-wrecked areas, they were soon to engage in a daily struggle with the mule-like eccentricities of a Ford.

## "LEST WE FORGET"

For five days the Section rested in Versailles, spending the time sight-seeing and enjoying the delights of the cafes. Before Good Friday, Lieutenant Gardam received orders to proceed to the front, and in the morning of that day, 503 drove away from Versailles. Entering Paris by the Porte St. Cloud, the convoy passed out of the city some hours later, by the Porte de Paris, after a thrilling experience of driving in Parisien traffic, but succeeding in leaving the city with only a few minor collisions and one serious affair when Private Martin accidentally bowled over a civilian. Meaux was reached finally and Sergeant Martin left for a four weeks' course at a school. Sergeant Scalley then became acting first sergeant. On the 30th of the month the Section arrived at Chalon-sur-Marne.

Four weeks were spent just outside of Chalons-sur-Marne in the village of St. Martin-sur-le-Pre. The cantonement of 503 was established in an old barn which had been fitted up with bunks. These bunks were shared with a community of rats which had an unpleasant habit of conducting relay races in the dead of the night on the outstretched forms of the fellows. Then, too, a portion of the cantonement had formerly been a chicken roost, and the outraged fowls would attempt to regain their home every time the door was incautiously left open. Another nocturnal disturber of the peace of the Section was the German aviators who quite frequently raided Chalons-sur-Marne. Several of the lads, not yet hardened veterans, were bounced several inches off their bunks by either the concussion of the exploding bombs or the tense condition of their nerves, during the first experience of a night raid. But subsequent attacks found them dauntless, and it became the custom to get out of bed and go outside to watch the thrilling event. One of the boys even went out with a lighted lantern one night, to see the Germans, but his comrades were inclined to consider this an unwise practice, so he was persuaded to leave his lantern in his bunk.

Another Section, S. S. U. 539, was quartered in the village with 503. The two Sections combined their kitchens and messes. On Easter Sunday an excellent dinner was served which was followed by a religious service in the mess hall. Later in the afternoon the new Easter bonnets, in the form of French steel helmets, and French gas masks were issued. Several days later an assignment of evacuation work at a French hospital, located some distance back of the lines at Billey-le-Grand, was given 503. This was to enable the drivers to acquire some practical experience before taking up evacuation work in advance zones of the front.

The chief pastime at St. Martin-sur-le-Pre was walking along the canal

## “LEST WE FORGET”

and Marne river, and going into Chalons-sur-Marne, to this latter place mainly for the purpose of shopping and other trivial motives. A sudden flurry in trade in that town was caused by a large demand for chauffeur's caps, map cases, field glasses, canes and cameras, by the drivers of the Section who earnestly desired to go forth to battle arrayed in all the accoutrements which, according to their imagination, were absolutely essential to the position of an ambulance driver.

To the regret of the Section, on April 18th, Lieutenant Gardam received orders to return to Base Camp, being relieved by 1st Lieutenant Lars S. Potter, a former member of the American Field Service who had received his commission at the C. I. A. M. Lieutenant Gardam up to this time had been the only section commander 503 had. The Section was reluctant to have Lieutenant Gardam leave for he had been the friend, as well as commanding officer, of every man in the Section. A formal farewell retreat was held on the evening of the 19th, at which time Sergeant Scalley, on behalf of the Section, presented Lieutenant Gardam with a gold wrist watch as a token of the high esteem in which he was held by 503.

Several days later the Section was assigned to the 132nd Division of the 4th French Army, commanded by General Gouraud. 503 relieved S. S. U. 581. On April 29th, six cars proceeded to the front, taking over the G. B. D. or field hospital, which was located at Camp Ouest, Snippes, and also the four advanced posts of the Division, known as "Posts-de-Secours." The remainder of the Section moved to Camp Noblette with S. S. U. 539. A week later both Sections' cantonement was moved to Bussey-le-Chateau.

The 132nd Division was commanded by General Huguenot with whom Lieutenant Potter, in the old days of the American Field Service, had become acquainted. Consequently, General Huguenot was glad to welcome an ambulance section commanded by Lieutenant Potter, and he treated 503 with marked attention. The Frenchmen of the division, too, exhibited an expressed degree of cordiality towards the Section.

Up to the last of May, 503 and S. S. U. 539 had been sharing cantonements. At Bussy-le-Chateau the official dignity of the Section was greatly enhanced by the advent of a French staff which consisted of Sous-Lieutenant, Jordan de la Passardiere, Sergent Robert Singer, Caporal-fourrier Henry Mauron, and Conducteur Pierre Chebero. Lieutenant Passardiere was officially presented to 503 at a formal retreat. Messieurs Singer,

## “LEST WE FORGET”

Mauron, and Chebero were admitted into the Section in a less conspicuous fashion, after the ways of all democratic Republics whose worthy citizens worship social position in civilian life, and military rank in army circles. Later on the staff was increased by the addition of Cuisiner-chef Roger Tresneau and Cuisiner 2nd-chef Emil Sonrel.

On May 29th, Sergeant Martin returned from the school at Meaux, and the following day, Sergeant Scalley left for there. On the 31st, the Section moved its cantonement to Camp Ouest, separating from S. S. U. 539. Late that night Lieutenant Potter received orders to send six ambulances up to the front to relieve S. S. U. 633 in that section to the left of the Suippes sector. Early the following morning the ambulances, with Mechanic Marshall and led by Lieutenant Potter and French officers in the staff car, proceeded towards the village of Mourmeleon-le-Grande. After the convoy had turned off the Suippes-St. Hilaire road, an enemy observation balloon sighted the dust stirred up by the ambulances and immediately the convoy was shelled. However, it reached Mourmeleon-le-Grande safely, though the mental condition of the unseasoned drivers was, very likely, far from tranquil. But, from there on the cars travelled the remaining distance to the advance Post of M4 at five minute intervals. At the Post-de-Secours Centrale, M4, the ambulances halted. Later on in the day a car was sent forward to three Posts further advanced. Two cars remained at M4 with Mechanic Marshall, the extra car returning to the cantonement the next day. All the other Posts of the Suippes sector were discontinued, with the exception of that at St. Hilaire which was maintained for several weeks longer.

In the meanwhile, the Section had moved its cantonement to Camp Berthelot, a few kilometers from the village of Mourmeleon-le-Grande. Camp Berthelot was an ideal cantonement; clean, well ventilated, wooden barracks with electric lights and beds, a mess hall, good water, in fact all the necessities desired. The camp lay in the open country, more or less. From it extended the wide, green expanse of the Champagne, marked here and there with groups of trees, with the dark outline of forests in the distance. Dusty white roads intersected the view while in one direction gleamed the wide military road known as the “Rue General Petain.” Up in the immediate front, Nature had concealed the destructive work of man with a luxurious carpet of red poppies which, according to the superstitions of the simple French peasants, grew only where the blood of men had been spilled.

## "LEST WE FORGET"

The quietness of the life at Camp Berthelot was disturbed only by the distant thunder of the guns. Daily the blue skies were dotted with the white, creamy puffs of anti-aircraft shells seeking an enemy plane overhead. The affairs of the Section were running smoothly, ambulances on duty at the front being relieved every two days. Once a week Lieutenant Potter held inspection of the cars in camp and everything was kept in the highest state of efficiency.

It was at the time the Section moved from Suippes that a fierce campaign was waged in 503. The issue was the question of having pinard purchased for the mess with Section funds. The issue was raised by the Prohibitionists of the Section headed by Private Barron, the "W. J. Bryan" of the Section. Lieutenant Potter referred the question to a vote. So the early days at Camp Berthelot were marked with a stubborn contest. Fore-runners of both sides waylaid all drivers returning from duty out on Posts, and besought votes. Many an appealing, cajoling, and long-winded argument was patiently borne by these returning drivers. But victory rested with the forces of Barron when the votes were counted, and the red-colored liquid was banished from the mess.

The 132nd Division was relieved on June 17th, and the Section's cantonement was moved to Vadenay. From there the first group of permissionaires, Private Bates, Luquet, and Bodine, left for a seven days' furlough. Bates was bound for Aix-le-Bains, Luquet to visit relatives in Southern France, and Bodine for Paris. On account of the strict military regulations, furloughs to Paris were restricted to only soldiers having relatives there. Private Bodine, with an eye to the future, had secured the name and address of an elderly American Red Cross woman, when the Section had passed through Paris the preceding March. Temporarily adopting this lady as an aunt, he obtained the coveted permission of a seven-day leave in that gay and reckless city and departed for there, presumably for the purpose of visiting the "aunt," very likely for a seven days' frolic amidst Parisien gayety.

During the absence of these men the Section's cantonement was changed to Buoy. Just as the ambulance train drew up in the town, a loud explosion occurred. Shells and shell-casings whizzed through the air and the startled men fell flat on the ground. When the violence abated, Lieutenant Potter drove away to investigate. He returned with the information that an ammunition dump nearby had exploded. This affair, how-

## "LEST WE FORGET"

ever, but marked the commencement of a consistent bombardment of Buoy by the enemy's long range artillery. On the outskirts of the town was a large abri or dug-out to which the entire population of the town repaired every night. Lieutenant Potter advised the Section to sleep there also. Several days later the division went back into line, and 503 returned to Camp Berthelot. The Posts-de-Secours were taken over again with some changes in their locations. Those at Village Gascon and St. Hilaire were discontinued. Three new ones were established at Moscou, P. C. Viard, and Bois Carre.

July Fourth was celebrated in the Section with the keenest enthusiasm and an abundance of champagne. In the morning the Section was reviewed and inspected by the commanding officer of the division, General Huguenot. In the early afternoon S. S. U. 633, then quartered in Mourmelon-le-Grande, came over and had dinner with 503. A concert in the "Foyer-du-Soldat" followed the dinner, with a baseball game between the two Sections later on in the afternoon.

On the night of the fifth, the ambulance on duty at the two most advanced Posts (Ham and Bois Carre) were ordered back to the Post Centrale, M4. From then on four cars were stationed at M4; each night a car visiting the advanced Posts for wounded. Continuous rumors were being circulated of a grand enemy attack as pending. A few days later, Lieutenant Potter ordered extra cars stationed every night at three points as a reserve in the event of the expected attack materializing. Sergeant Martin took two cars to M4, nightly; Sergeant Mackey two to Sepiniere; and Corporal Allison, two to Camp Normandie. Before the attack did commence the extra cars at M4 were withdrawn.

The commander of the 4th French Army, General Gouraud, issued a proclamation at this time, calling on the soldiers of his command to stand firm in the coming attack and not fail "La France." Bastille Day found affairs still in a quiet state though in a great condition of expectancy. This holiday was also celebrated by 503, the drivers out on Post enjoying an especially royal time with their French comrades. At 1.30 the Posts were relieved as usual. Precisely at midnight the enemy laid down their initial barrage. The attack was on at last! But the wily French, having full knowledge of the plans of the Germans, anticipated the latter's barrage with one of their own by half an hour. Indeed the French had spent several weeks in preparation for this event. Their artillery was massed solidly throughout the whole Champagne sector, and cavalry were held in readiness several kilometers behind the lines.

## “LEST WE FORGET”

The German barrage gradually extended till by morning the whole country for miles around was covered. At M4, one of the ambulances had made a trip to the hospital just before the commencement of the barrage and was unable to return to the Post. The three other drivers there had abandoned their dug-out for a deeper one. A few hours later, a shell penetrated the roof of their former quarters, blowing everything to bits.

The men at the cantonement were awakened by Lieutenant Potter shortly after the commencement of affairs. He ordered them into the trench alongside the barracks, as the shells were falling around the camp. Around three o'clock a shell wrecked the former quarters of Sergeant Martin. Soon after that, Lieutenant Potter decided that the cantonement could be more comfortably located at a more distant spot and acting on that decision, he gave orders to speedily abandon Camp Berthelot, laying particular emphasis on the need of haste. Shortly before daybreak, the camion was loaded and the men departed. Cooks Hill and Smith, with several of their comrades, stayed behind to reload the truck when it returned. It happened that they had a narrow escape when a shell burst on the spot where they had just been standing. No one was hit, though Cook Hill fell on the bag of beans he had been carrying to the truck.

A temporary cantonement was established several miles further back from the lines at Camp Farnum. Meanwhile, Privates James Brown, McHenry, and Sharman, had been slightly gassed at Post Normandie. At M4, the ambulances commenced evacuation soon after daybreak. Private Younger's ambulance was damaged by éclat at this Post, so two extra cars were sent forward to assist in the evacuation. Corporal Allison at Normandie had started his evacuation by this time, and, as he had not enough drivers, three having been gassed, he took a car and drove the greater portion of the day.

At Sepiniere, Sergeant Mackey was prevented from moving his wounded till after twelve o'clock on account of the terrific bombardment of the roads. By one o'clock it had abated somewhat, and his ambulances got away. The Posts of Moscou and Viard had not been heard from up to this time. Around two o'clock, Private Bates rode in from Viard on a bicycle. He reported his ambulance damaged by éclat. Shortly after his appearance, Private Boyle walked in, leading a group of "petite Blesses." Bates returned to Viard again through the barrage. At five o'clock, Privates Don and Flindt came on foot from Moscou, reporting the roads to that Post as impassable. They carried in despatches from the Medicin-



## "LEST WE FORGET"

Chef who, expecting momentarily the capture of Moscou, had ordered them to attempt to get through with the papers.

By the middle of the afternoon, despite many difficulties, the Posts, with the exception of those isolated, were practically cleared of the wounded. The hospital at Mourmeleon was overflowing with wounded within a short time after the attack started. This necessitated the ambulances travelling a much greater distance to the hospital at La Veuve. La Veuve was receiving wounded from all points of the Champagne, from Rheims to Verdun. This forced the drivers to wait hours in line at the hospital, thus considerably crippling the Section in its evacuation of the Posts.

As the world knows, the Grand Offensive of the German Army, which began July 15th, 1918, was a complete failure. The Champagne was one of the vital points in that attack, for the enemy sought to gain the important and strategic railroad center of Chalons-sur-Marne. By so doing they would have cut in two the army of the French along the southern portion of the Western Battle Front.

The second day of the attack was much quieter and before the end of the week the sector had resumed its former tranquil state. The 132nd Division held the line, having been pushed back only a short distance of a mile. Later this loss was retrieved. But Section 503 moved back to Camp Berthelot. On July 21st the division was relieved and went back on reserve. The Section shifted its cantonement to Buoy and five days later, the division going back "en repos," the Section moved to the village of Dampierre.

In the whole attack not a single casualty occurred in the Section. Three ambulances were so badly wrecked as to necessitate them being replaced; one ambulance was temporarily rendered useless; and a number of machines had been pierced by éclat and machine gun bullets. Private Bates and James Brown salvaged the former's car at Post Viard early in the attack. Private Flindt's car was later recovered by Sergeant Mackey and James Brown, which was rather a risky proposition as Moscou was at that time in full view of the enemy's front line trench.

At Dampierre, the first step was cleaning and repairing the ambulances. The only other duty, excepting the usual routine incidental to a cantonement, was for two cars to make a trip daily to the regiments of the division for sick soldiers. As these men were evacuated to the hospital at

## “LEST WE FORGET”

Chalons-sur-Marne, some eighteen odd kilometers distant, several of the fellows went in with each car. There was always keen rivalry for this privilege as it was a delightful change to pass a few hours amidst the gayety of Chalons-sur-Marne, after the weeks out in the vast loneliness of the front.

The amusements in Dampierre were not of a great variety. Several of the fellows were accustomed to walking to another village every evening. They invariably took a canteen bottle along, carefully stating before starting, that the purpose of the trip was to purchase milk. But these chaps generally managed to arrive at the farm early, which lent color to the report that they were more interested in watching a certain French maid as she milked the cows, than actually desiring the milk.

Another nightly custom at Dampierre was singing. Collecting in a group the crowd would sing all the old familiar songs accompanied by Privates Fullwood Hayes, Hodges, and Luquet on their string instruments. This habit would please the French civilians in the village. One evening the three musicians were asked to play in a house, which they did, while several peasant couples danced in wooden shoes on the stone-flagged floor of their combination parlor, dining room and kitchen.

After a week's rest at Dampierre, the Section broke camp and travelled northward. Making a detour after leaving Chalons-sur-Marne to avoid the dangerous vicinity of Chateau Thierry, the convoy reached Meaux at noon on the second day's journey. The Section halted at a cafe for dinner which, after an hour of waiting, materialized into a couple of eggs and a cup of coffee per man. Greatly refreshed by this bounteous repast, 503 resumed its journey, reaching Senlis (which town contained the headquarters of Marshal Foch) later in the afternoon and moving on to Verberie-sur-Oise. Two days later the Section moved to a farm outside of the village of Marieul-sur-Ourcq.

On this farm there was a small French lad about thirteen years of age, whose name was Maurice a Merci. Maurice was in a rather forlorn condition, thin and ragged and appearing to be half starved. He had become separated from his relatives during the German occupation of that region in the vicinity of the Ourcq River. So 503 decided to adopt him as Section mascot. Mechanic McKenna oiled up the Section clippers and rendered to Maurice a first-aid, or rather emergency, tonsorial treatment. An army uniform was turned over to the division tailor to be made into a

## “LEST WE FORGET”

suit for the lad. Shoes, shirts, and every other necessary article of clothing, and equipment from tooth brush to mess kit, was supplied by various ones. The mascot of Section 503 soon presented an appearance truly consistent with his relationship to such an outfit as 503.

The old farm was not of sufficient size to furnish all the room necessary so the Section tent was erected for a mess hall. It was nearly the middle of August at that time, and the days were hot and dry. A swarm of yellow jackets soon invaded the cantonement, becoming especially conspicuous at mess time. Jam and other sweet articles drew these insects, who as a rule drowned themselves in the coffee cups, or sought a suicide's grave in corned-beef hash. 503 at last grew tired of constantly extracting these bright-striped bodies from the food and, calmly accepting the inevitable, soon formed the habit of eating a mess consisting of two parts regulation food and one part yellow jackets.

A short distance from the cantonement was a canal where Private Alexander Martin was wont to go a-fishing day after day. There is, however, no record of the mess as having, at any time, consisted of fresh fish. But an old, flat-bottom, canal boat was discovered on the canal and another pastime was pursued. Many an evening was spent in poling the scow up and down. Corporal Allison generally emulated Captain Kidd on these exploring expeditions, while "General" Treanor, and Privates Clark and McHenry served as the faithful henchmen.

One night, several drivers went out with their ambulances. The Germans had bombed the town of La Ferte Milon, causing great havoc and killing or wounding a number of French soldiers. Private Flindt was among these drivers. In a few hours all of them had returned but Flindt. The next day a car was sent out to find him but failed to do so. Finally he was found at the evacuation hospital at Villers Cotteret. Having reached the hospital with his wounded during the night, Flindt could not recall the name of, or the route to, the village of Marieul-sur-Oureq, near which the cantonement was located, consequently he had been lost and strayed around the country, in his travels visiting Soissons and Chateau Thierry, before he was found.

August 14th found the Section established in the heart of the forests of Compiègne, in the village of St. Jean-au-Bois. Sergeant Scalley had rejoined the Section by this time. Corporal Allison was despatched to Verberie-sur-Oise with ten ambulances to carry on the evacuation work at the hospital there. Verberie-sur-Oise lay too far behind the lines to

## “LEST WE FORGET”

be shelled, but on many a bright, starlight night, the drivers listened to the hum of Boche motors in the heavens, and the sharp crack of shells hurled in the air at them. On the 19th, Corporal Allison reported back to the Section with his ambulances and the cantonement was moved to Francport, across from the Chateau of the Marquis de l'Aigle (where some months later the German envoys rested over night before signing the Armistice which ended the war).

Francport lay on the Aisne river about six kilometers from Compiègne. Below it lies the city of Soissons which the Americans had lately taken from the enemy. To the left of Francport is Noyon, a city noted principally as the birthplace of Calvin, that great religious leader. Noyon was held by the Germans. As the military situation was at this time, the 132nd Division, under the army commanded by General Mangin, was in line just ahead of, and to the right of, Carlepont, and in the center of that plateau which stretches forward from the farm Le Cense. To the right of the 132nd Division was the 32nd American Division; to the left, the army of General Humbert, who was waiting to attack Noyon. Before he could do this, however, it was necessary that the 132nd Division move forward in conjunction with his divisions, driving back the foe immediately ahead.

The cantonement of the Section was in a partly demolished house in Francport which had a wine cellar beneath it, and a large cave nearby which assured security in case of an air attack. Across the river, a short distance, was a large American Naval gun. This gun drew the fire and planes of the enemy, and the first night in Francport was marked by an artillery bombardment of the village. In spite of this, the drivers were on the road the next morning (August 20th) with ten ambulances, moving forward to a position behind the lines. Fifteen minutes after reaching this spot, the group of drivers with the sergeants and officers, stood under the roof of an old shed and witnessed the opening artillery barrage of the Oise-Aisne attack, the second attack and first offensive participated in by Section 503.

It was late in the morning before the Posts were established. In reality, only one Post was located, that being in a large cave which had been the headquarters of a German general. This Post served as a depot for the wounded of three divisions. When the ambulances reached there, the conditions were appalling. Strewn over the ground were Moroccans, Colonials, Senegalese, and native French. The condition of these wounded was rendered more aggravating by the scarcity of water. Private Barron,

## “LEST WE FORGET”

who with great foresight had once invested in a large milk can which he always kept full of water and carried strapped to the side of his ambulance, was able to help these unfortunate soldiers somewhat. The day was hot and the roads dusty. Soon the drivers were covered with a fine layer of white dust. Steadily all day long, and far into the night, the ambulances traveled back and forth to the hospitals which were located at Compiene, Royalieu, and Verberie-sur-Oise. The last named town was nearly fifty kilometers distant from the Posts-de-Secour. All twenty ambulances were in action before the day was over.

The second day found the division slowly moving forward. It had gained its first objective, the village of Cuts, with ease on the first day. A Post was established at a spot known as Bellfontaine which was off the main road. It was reached by a road, the surface of which could be likened to a vast sheet of corrugation. The third day found the field hospital situated in an old quarry in the “Bois de Cuckoo.” This quarry lay only a short distance from Cuts, but a large hill separated the two places. The road to the front turned a sharp angle at the quarry, winding up over the hill and on through Cuts. The Germans shelled this spot constantly and with great severity. Quite frequently Austrian “whiz-bangs” were mingled with the German 77’s, which fact rendered discretion extremely advisable.

At Francport, Sergeant Scalley was placed in charge of the mess and Sergeant Mackey in charge of transportation. The latter was unceasingly busy, for the roads were in a terrible condition and the cars were coming in to the cantonement at all hours of the day and night for repairs. Front springs seemed to be the main feature of repairs. Mechanics Marshall and McKenna were forever on their backs under machines and Private Hess was finally detailed as their assistant.

The stone quarry at Cuckoo was a safe shelter. Long tunnels extended in various directions under the Cuts hill, and, though damp and clammy, with a rough, uneven flooring, made a fairly comfortable abri. The French medical officers used a part of it as a dressing station and operating room for the wounded. The stretcher-bearers and ambulance drivers slept in other parts. The division barber conducted his business whenever a customer appeared. The tonsorial parlor was generally located in an open space of the quarry. Very frequently the operations would be interrupted by the hum of an approaching shell with its old familiar song of “I’ll get YOU this time”; barber and customer would abruptly terminate the sitting and duck for shelter, to resume operations again till the next shell was heard.

## “LEST WE FORGET”

Lieutenant Potter discovered a German sign up over the hill, which bore the lettering of “Section 503”; evidently there had been a German ambulance section of the same number as this Section. The Lieutenant suggested to Sergeant Scalley, who had come up from Francport, that he secure the sign. The Sergeant selected that gay and irrepressible youth, Private James Brown, to assist him. But, on approaching the coveted trophy, they found that a “potato masher” grenade hung suspended from the board. As Sergeant Scalley later remarked, discretion became the better part of valor, and the sign remained in its original position. The enemy was reluctant to allow the two men to escape for on their journey back to the quarry, “whiz-bangs” continually landed in an adjacent field, advancing across the field in accord with their progress along the road.

The division continued to advance on the 21st, but more Posts were established in and beyond Cuts. Cuts was shelled and bombed consistently, rendering it a precarious place to pass through. Reserve ambulances were stationed at the quarry, Sergeants Scalley and Mackey having charge of the depot for a time; to be relieved later by Sergeant Martin and Corporal Allison.

The Section cantonement, in the meanwhile, had been moved from Francport to the farm, Le Cesne. Private Don, who was the official dispenser of gasoline in the Section, had gone to the hospital on the day of moving, having been vanquished in a battle with the Section’s cook-stove, with two smashed fingers as a result. At Le Cesne, the mechanics were handling an increased amount of repair work, and Private Hess was given the rating of mechanic, as he had proven exceptionally fine ability since assisting in that line of work.

After a lapse of some days, the field hospital, or G. B. D., moved to the village of Besme and the division re-attacked, this time along the canal and Ailette River. Stubborn fighting ensued, in which great casualties occurred. It was only after repeated attacks that the infantry succeeded in crossing the river. Six ambulances of S. S. U. 535 came out to assist 503. The situation, from the medical standpoint, had become acute, and the drivers were in action night and day.

The field hospital at Besme was, as had been when located in the quarry at Bois de Cuckoo, the central reserve for the ambulances. Besme was several kilometers beyond Cuts in the opposite direction from Noyon. Forward to the right lay the forest of St. Gobain, in which was located the German gun which had shelled Paris. The Posts were not a great distance

## "LEST WE FORGET"

from Besme and ambulances from them always were replaced immediately by a car from the reserve force.

The route from Besme to the hospitals lay from that village to Blerancourt; straight on through Cameleon to Cuts; turning off at right angles eight kilometers from Noyon, and up over a hill to Carlepont and Tracy-le-Val; on through the forest of Compiègne to Choissy-au-Bac; and over the river to Compiègne. The route from Cuts formerly had been the road up over the Cuts hill, past the quarry, Le Cesne, through Retondes, and up the bank of the Aisne River to Francport, and on to Choissy-au-Bac. The advantage of the last named route lay in the fact that the drive through the forest of Compiègne was eliminated, for at night time, and especially after a rain, the course through the woods was difficult and collisions were more likely to occur.

The roads from Besme were often haunted by German planes. Beyond Cuts, the German avions both bombed and used their machine guns on the road traffic. While the route through Francport was being used, two drivers had just crossed the bridge over the Aisne River at Choissy-au-Bac one clear moonlight night when a bomb shattered another bridge a short distance away. Reaching Francport, the drivers of the two ambulances were forced to wait in the cantonement an hour while the "night-hawks" bombed the entire district between the villages of Retondes and Choissy-au-Bac.

The villages and towns were the most dangerous spots for the ambulance drivers on their trips to the hospitals. At Blerancourt, Private Hauseman, of S. S. U. 535, suddenly found himself shy the rear of his ambulance; a shell had hit behind his car and wrecked it, but he escaped without injury. Compeigne, that city which once beheld the glories of France from Joan of Arc, to Napoleon III, but now deserted and desolate, was an especially dangerous spot. This city seemed to be the object of the keen wrath and hatred of the Huns, and, bombed and shelled constantly, it was ever fraught with thrilling excitement for the drivers passing through. One night, Private Cook was knocked from his car by the concussion of a bomb which had dropped nearby, blocking his path with the debris of a house it had struck.

Private Younger's ambulance one day came into Besme under unusual circumstances. With three stretcher cases inside the machine and some wounded on the front with the driver, Younger had received a shower of éclat from a bursting shell which killed one of his stretcher patients and wounded all the others but Younger, who escaped without a scratch.

## “LEST WE FORGET”

A volume could not contain the accounts of all the individual adventures and experiences of the men of 503. Privates Myatt and Bodine once picked up four stranded American second lieutenants of the 32nd Division and carried them and their baggage to Vic-sur-Aisne which was some distance out of the usual route. From Vic-sur-Aisne they started on a straight line across country for Cuts. Private Bodine, believing his wanderings through Jersey swamps had given him the sagacity of a crow, led the way with the result that the two men ended up on the front of the 32nd Division, and became entangled in an American artillery column, while the Germans banged away with their 77's.

Private Fullwood Hayes managed to run down a French civilian one night. Private Boyle massaged the back of a French soldier with the front wheel of his Ford. Private William Brown turned up at Besme one day minus a tire. The Germans started a bombardment about the time Brown experienced a blow-out, and the latter never waited to complete repairs, preferring, doubtless, the loss of a tire to the possibility of a transfer from the material to the abstract. Private Gorham had earned the title of "Section Ace," having smashed the necessary quota of tailgates and radiators. Private Charley Winkler's exploits with the staff car won him undying fame. Also during this attack, Privates Joachim and Egner, with several of the other drivers, had a close call in Cuts, when an enemy plane dropped some bombs.

503 was handicapped by a prevalence of dysentery. Several of the drivers were laid up with it, Private Joachim being the worst case. Private Treanor became ill and went to Base Camp. Private Flindt was accidentally shot in the leg, being evacuated to a hospital. They, with Private Don, rejoined the Section later. Corporal Allison drove Private Trainor's car for a time but was forced to forego duty finally, he too, becoming ill. Private Clark, who remained hale and hearty throughout the period of illnesses, carried on the duties of Private Don of distributing gasoline.

In the meanwhile, the enemy's resistance became greater, General Huguenot being wounded, and the entire 330th Regiment being almost completely annihilated. Twelve hundred men of the 166th Regiment were gassed. It was a pitiful sight at the Posts where these men were, to see strong, able-bodied men suddenly rendered blind, grouped together and led by stretcher-bearers, crying like babies, and piteously begging "le conducteur Americaine" to take them away. The ambulances were overloaded,



## "LEST WE FORGET"

and the French pressed into service several large auto trucks, Sergeant Mackey also assisting with the Section's Garford truck.

An amusing incident occurred during the early evening of that day. A threatening storm had caused the night to set in early; the darkness prevented even the nearest objects along the road being discerned. Private Dougherty's ambulance slid into a vast bomb hole, turning upside down. Over half of the drivers were unfamiliar with the route to the Post so Private Younger headed a convoy of about ten cars. Younger stopped suddenly, with the result that a succession of quick, sharp reports were heard as the machines following him crashed into each other. At that moment, as if Mother Nature was in an ironical mood, the darkness faded away and the moon came forth, its light revealing the demoralized convoy, with Private Dougherty's ambulance lying in the hole nearby.

On September 16th, the division was relieved and went "en repos" at Ivors. Shortly after the arrival there, a difference of opinion arose between Sergeant Martin on the one part, and the personnel of 503, on the other. As the issue developed into a stubborn disagreement which would have proved detrimental to the ultimate success of the Section's military career, Sergeant Martin requested to be relieved of his duties. Upon approval from headquarters, Lieutenant Potter complied with his wishes and Sergeant Scalley became top-sergeant of Section 503.

A grand review of the 132nd Division, or what was left of it, was held on the 25th of September by General Sicre, who had replaced General Huguenot. Section 503 was given the place of honor on the field. General Sicre addressed the division, in his address paying tribute to the work done by "our gallant comrades, the American Army." On the completion of his address he dismounted from his horse, and the various decorations were awarded. Now, the French invariably wore overcoats at all military formations without regards to whether the day was hot or cold, the season, summer or winter. For some inexplicable reason the overcoats were discarded for this ceremony, and during the morning a cold, drizzling rain set in. 503 had followed the French in the matter of overcoats. So, when thirteen members of 503 were decorated with the Croix de Guerre with Divisional Citation, they thrilled with emotion and honor, but shivered more with the chill of the penetrating dampness. The Section, too, was awarded a citation, as was Private Hauseman, of S. S. U. 535, one of the six drivers of that Section, who had worked with 503 in the recent attack.

The leisure hours at Ivors were spent in divers fashion. Every day an

## “LEST WE FORGET”

ambulance visited the regiments, taking the sick to the hospital at Villers Cotteret. These trips to the hospital gave the newly decorated drivers an opportunity to purchase Croix de Guerre bars to wear on their noble breasts. A few trips to the city of Meaux were made at various times, by various men, for various motives, this latter according to the finances, needs and disposition of those making the trip. Several tournaments of African golf were held and in the evenings “Black Jack” and chess formed the recreation. One afternoon, a heavy game of “golf” netted one enterprising young gentleman several hundred francs. He promptly invested a portion of his wealth in “beaucoup de champagne.” The latter portion of the afternoon was marked for its hilarity. Over by the gate, two individuals, inspired by the champagne, were performing a heartrending and an entirely novel version of “The Love Scene from Faust,” bringing out vividly the more touching parts by rubbing noses together.

It was during the period at Ivors that Section 503 first became acquainted with the fine work of the “Greatest Mother in the World,” the Red Cross. Sergeant Scalley made several trips to Beauvais, where a Red Cross depot was situated, to bring back chocolate, candy and cigarettes, besides articles for the kitchen, along the line of provisions.

On September 30th, the cantonement of 503 was changed from Ivors to the village of Acy. Acy lies in the Aisne sector near Soissons, and is entirely in ruins. The once humble homes of simple French peasants, and the venerable church in which they worshipped, were nothing but masses of crumbling stone and broken timber wrought by that fiend who sought to emulate the Almighty among his fellow men. Section 503 was given as a cantonement a partly demolished school house which was perched on the point of a hill overlooking one of the valleys where the American Divisions had fought back the foe so valiantly a few months previous. Some of the fellows found undamaged rooms in some of the battered houses and gathered articles of furniture from around the village, establishing, practically, palatial residences. Clerk Weidler and Private Boyle, inseparable partners in many an escapade, lived in an especially luxurious apartment, with a large fire place and upholstered armchairs.

The 132nd Division did not, as was expected, go into action on the Aisne Front, but, on October 5th, entrained for a point in the north. Section 503 left Acy the following day, driving en convoy. It halted in Compiègne for an hour, and while there received news of the enemy's request for a cessation of hostilities. Lieutenant Potter remarked on the news but

## “LEST WE FORGET”

cautioned the men against entertaining false hopes, predicting, as was later borne out by events, that the Allies had yet to place the foe in a position where he could be most effectually dealt with.

On the 8th of October the Section arrived at the village of St. Sylvestre (near Cassel). There the division awaited 503. The Section parked their machines in a field. Tents were secured from the British, but the majority of the men preferred to sleep in their ambulances. Rainy weather rendered existence dreary, and the only amusement was in the evenings when the fellows gathered in a cafe and sang while Sergeant Mackey accompanied on the piano. Private Weaver one afternoon shot off a star shell which described a beautiful arc and landed in the straw-thatched roof of a farmhouse. The straw commenced to burn and a hole of a fairly good size was made in the roof before the fire was extinguished. The old farmer manifested some evidence of annoyance over the incident, but 503 never heard more of it.

On the 13th of the month, 503 crossed over into Belgium, establishing the cantonement in the town of Poperinghe. This region was the sector of the British and famous for the valor of their armies during the early part of the war. Poperinghe, which lies about fifteen kilometers from Ypres, was a British military center of recreation and contained a Y. M. C. A., rest rooms, and a theatre where English troops gave shows.

Several ambulances were sent out on duty at Posts up near the lines. An attack was on, but the 132nd Division followed in its wake, and did not go into action for a time. The ambulance drivers who were on duty, wallowed in and cursed the famous mud of Flanders. They were stationed in spots which bore titles, such as “Hell’s Corner,” “Dead Man’s Row,” “Suicide Corner,” and “Hindenburg’s Hill.”

When the tide of battle had swept beyond the city of Roulers, the 132nd division went into action in the front line. Section 503 broke camp at Poperinghe and moved forward to the city of Roulers, entering upon their second offensive and third attack, the Ypres-Lys Offensive. At Ypres the convoy was held up for a few minutes, and while there viewed the desolate ruins of that tragic spot. Towering above the jagged outline of broken buildings was the gaunt skeleton of the tower of the city hall, with the ruins of the Cloth Hall to one side of it. In fact, the vast expanse of destruction, and the many spectacles of whole towns in ruins, in this country of Flanders, impressed the Section with the fact that the stories of German atrocities and barbarity were unquestionably authentic.

## “LEST WE FORGET”

The 132nd Division swept forward swiftly, so swiftly that at times the artillery would no sooner be placed than it would be forced to change its position as the Germans had retreated beyond range. From Roulers, ambulances were sent out, Private McHenry encountering a number of harrowing experiences at night time. Private George Martin was at a Post on one occasion, and strolling around, happened to notice that a line of infantrymen were only a few hundred yards from him. They were fixing bayonets, preparing to charge. Martin, who was not aware of his proximity to the line, prudently sought a less exposed spot.

The Posts-de-Sours, in this attack, were at first but temporary, for the division moved too rapidly to establish permanent ones. The field hospital was situated in Roulers adjacent the Section's cantonement. Evacuations were made over the waste lands of the district around Ypres, to a hospital near the frontier. Later a hospital was established in Roulers which greatly shortened the distance of these evacuations, and eliminated the bad stretches that skirted the eastern edge of the city.

The Post at Meulebeke was a dangerous one in the early days of the attack. Several of the drivers, including Private Herbert Hayes especially, had some thrilling experiences there. The Post also received a great number of wounded which one night kept Privates Fullwood Hayes and Bodine and Sergeant Mackey constantly on the road. On starting from Roulers on one trip, Bodine burnt out a bearing of his motor. Being some distance from the cantonement, he decided to go on to Meulebeke after another load of wounded. By the time he reached there his machine rattled like a thrashing machine. Bodine returned to Roulers with some wounded and exchanged his ambulance for another, and continued driving till the Post was cleared. The next day the mechanics examined the motor and found its interior to be in an appalling condition, which aroused the ire of Lieutenant Potter, and the muttered curses of the two Mechanics, Marshall and McKenna.

From Roulers the cantonement was shifted to Meulebeke. The drivers who had previously been on duty in that village, were the first Americans the villagers had seen. Lieutenant Potter and Sergeant Mackey drove into the town and parked their machine in the square. As they stepped out of the car, the burgomaster walked over to them and asked if they were English. Lieutenant Potter informed him they were Americans. Upon hearing this, the burgomaster took off his hat, shook hands heartily, and cried, "The Americans are our liberators." All the civilians greeted the men, the male civilians tipping their hats, the women bowing.

## “LEST WE FORGET”

A large brick building was assigned to 503 as a cantonement. The sleeping quarters were established in the basement, safe from the shell and shrapnel of the enemy's guns. The gentlemen of the village formed a habit of coming into this cellar every night with their wives and children on account of the nightly bombardment. Naturally, this procedure greatly embarrassed 503.

October 25th, found the cantonement in the village of Denterghem. The Section was under circumstances heretofore not experienced; i. e., its cantonement being situated between its division's artillery and front lines. The hum of their own shells mingled overhead with those of the enemy. 503 was quartered in a two-story house behind which was the field hospital. The lines were then along the banks of the Lys River. In the vicinity of the village of Olsene, the French encountered a fierce resistance and repeated efforts failed to dislodge the foe.

The casualties of the 132nd Division by this time had reached such proportions as to keep the ambulances active continually. Private Younger had been evacuated to an American hospital with a serious illness. The remainder of the drivers were kept very busy, and the extra men on occasions assisted in the evacuations. The Posts were situated an extraordinarily short distance from the field hospital, in comparison with the locations of them in preceding attacks. But this was due principally to the policy of the medical staff of the unit, in having the medical unit follow closely the movements of the infantry.

During the last week of October, the 132nd Division was relieved by the 37th American Division. The 132nd retired to a reserve position. The Americans took over the field hospital of the French. When the 37th attacked, Lieutenant Potter offered the services of 503's train of ambulances to the commanding officer of the field hospital. The officer asked for six cars, after the attack commenced. These ambulances worked with the Americans for two days, and astonished the American Major by the rapidity and efficiency of their evacuations.

While the 132nd Division was in reserve, 503 moved back to Muelebeke. That village was occupied by Americans and the Section was bothered extensively by the rules and regulations issued by the headquarters of the 37th Division. For the Section had always led a life entirely free from the restraint and exactions which characterized the American military units. To be subject once more to the rigid rules was a hardship which recalled the days of St. Nazaire and Major Metcalfe.

## “LEST WE FORGET”

From Muelebeke, 503 moved forward to the village of Lede on November 10th. The 132nd Division was moving up to attack again. But that night a Belgian, who spoke English, poked his head in the window of the cantonement and imparted information that the war would probably cease in a few hours. While rumors to that effect had been heard before, the Belgian's news was the first that could be called unquestionable. Sleep was out of the question. No more would there be the long, harrowing night-driving without lights; no more to listen to the hum of hostile motors in the heavens; no more to hear the agonized cries of suffering men being borne over rough roads; no more of blood and frightful wounds; that is the sum and substance of the thoughts, created by the news of that Belgian, in the minds of the lads of 503.

In the morning, Sergeant Singer informed the Section of the official announcement of the signing of the terms for an armistice, by the envoys of the Germans. This ceremony took place on the train of Marshal Foch near the village of Retondes in the territory of the second attack of Section 503.

On the 12th of November, 503 returned to Muelebeke. The 37th Division had nearly all left the village. On the 15th, the villagers held a celebration of some national holiday. A band concert was given in the afternoon. In the evening, which was a clear moonlight, the fellows of the Section started a snake dance in the town square. French soldiers and Belgian civilians joined in till a great line twisted in and out of the throng of people. But the celebration was abruptly halted by an attack of the civilians on the home of the burgomaster, and 503 quickly withdrew to the cantonement, following out the American policy of not mixing in European political scraps.

The 132nd Division was in a position of uncertainty. “Old Genera. Rumor” had it that the division was bound for Germany by way of Brussels. Another day would bring news that the division would move in the opposite direction, for Dunkirk, France. Thanksgiving Day was celebrated in the village of Cruyshautem. Cooks Hill and Smith, with the assistance of Privates Barron and Dougherty, prepared a truly royal dinner of rabbit, mashed potatoes, turnips, celery, corn, hot chocolate, and, for dessert, cake with a chocolate covering. Many of the fellows had observed the day by going to the city of Ghent for a real old-fashioned American style bath in a regular bath tub.

## “LEST WE FORGET”

On the 29th of November, the division started on a journey for Dunkirk, covered one day's journey, and halted. The march was never resumed. In December, Marshal Petain visited the division at Aerseele and decorated two regiments. In contrast to the last ceremony of awarding decoration in the previous September, Section 503 occupied the informal, and even less conspicuous, position of mere witnesses at the occasion.

The General's headquarters of the division was located in Aerseele. So was the Section's; and while the General occupied the largest house in the village, the Section had naught but an old brewery utterly devoid of everything, even the "brew," which otherwise might have given the Section an advantage over the General. The brewery was soon rendered comfortable, and what had formerly been store rooms for grain, were transformed into attractive apartments. There were "The Room of the Blasted Hopes," maintained by Bates; the "Nursery," superintended by Bodine; and the "Den," run by McHenry, where the intellectuals and the elite were wont to gather on an evening when not on a pilgrimage to "The Mad House."

A strictly military parade of the division was held on Christmas Day in Ghent. Section 503 was one of the attractions. Marching eight abreast, preceded by acting Color Sergeants Mackey and James Brown, bearing the Section and American emblems, and carefully guarded by Corporal Allison, with Lieutenant Potter and the French Lieutenant leading, the Section swept the good townspeople off their feet, figuratively speaking. "Les Americaines" was the cry that filled the air, frequently intermingled at times with "Vive les Senegalese," as the Section was mistaken for the barbarian troops from that French colony. The cheering and enthusiasm became so unrestrained, at one time, that Private Gorham was forced to receive on behalf of the Section, the full burden of an especial demonstration of patriotic fervor, when one frantic young feminine Belgian flung herself on his neck. Private Gorham shouldered his burden without a murmur, and as he dealt with an unforeseen situation according to the instincts and traditions of 503, the parade moved on uninterrupted. The Section remained in Ghent over night, and the next morning Private Jones' ambulance tried to enter a cafe, doubtless influenced in its action by having once seen its driver do the same.

After Christmas and the New Year, the life in Aerseele became thoroughly monotonous. During December it was the custom to send drivers out to the regiments for a week's duty but this had been supplanted by the old method of a car making the rounds daily. Every week, the fellows made

## “LEST WE FORGET”

trips to Ghent for baths. There were some trips to Tirlemont, via Brussels and Louvain, where the repair parc was located. Private Hodges, though, was the only member of 503 to visit Antwerp. It was at this time that Cooks Hill and Smith asked to be relieved of kitchen duties, Private Hayes and Sharman replaced them.

The men of 503 often held conspicuous and undesired positions in Belgium. Americans were unknown in certain portions of the country. In one village where a Post was situated, the driver on duty there could never stroll up the street without a band of curious youngsters trailing after him, the clickety-clack of their wooden shoes heralding his appearance to the goodly housewives who would flock to the doors and windows to see him pass by. Even in Ghent the curious, though friendly, stares of the people were encountered. Some of the fellows made friends among the better class of the population.

Aerseele remained the home of 503 until the last of February, when, the 132nd Division having dissolved, the Section returned to France, establishing its cantonement in the village of Madeleine, on the outskirts of Lille. There the train of ambulances were overhauled and painted. Between the “Rue A. B. C.,” and the “Cinema,” Lille furnished the Section with sufficient amusement, and the time passed quickly. On March 18th, 503 relieved S. S. U. 533 with the 31st French Division at Maubeuge.

503 took over the duties with that division on the 19th. Seven cars were immediately sent out on duty. Then the French continually called for more cars till, if Sergeant Scalley had not intervened, the staff car and Clerk Weidler's pet camionette would have gone out, like the ambulances, to do pleasure trips for the French officers. Lieutenant Potter had left the Section some little time previous and was replaced by Lieutenant Swann. Lieutenant Swann, immediately on his assumption of command, withdrew the ambulances from their duties “d'amour.” The French were limited to less than half the number of cars they had originally requested.

Section 503 was longing to return to America. From time to time the fellows had read in the Ambulance Service newspaper, “The Radiator” the list of the Sections that had sailed for home, and those at Base Camp ready to depart. The days passed slowly in Maubeuge, with some baseball games and roller-skating as pastime. Finally S. S. U. 528 relieved 503 on the 8th of April and two days later the return to Base Camp commenced. A route was taken by Lieutenant Swann which took the convoy through the old battle grounds of the Somme, through the towns of St. Quentin, Ham, and



## “LEST WE FORGET”

Noyon, to familiar scenes of former experiences, Compiègne and its vicinity. The Section halted overnight in Compiègne, reaching the Ambulance Garage in Paris the next afternoon. The Base Camp at Ferriers-en-Gatinais was reached on the 12th of April.

Base Camp had been considered the termination of the trip with the ambulance train. But Section 503 halted at the Camp for a day; the ambulances were then taken to an American M. T. C. parc at Romarantin, a long journey from Ferriers-en-Gatinais. Returning to the Base Camp, 503 learned it had to take another train of ambulances to the parc. A third trip followed before the Section commenced the preparations for the final journey.

Lieutenant Swann was replaced in command of 503 by Lieutenant Hugh J. Bubb. Then the Section was deloused and treated to a rigid medical examination. These steps accomplished, 503 along with other Sections, was placed in quarantine, in a segregated portion of the Camp. Packs were issued, and as the contingent was formed, the old routine of the American Army slowly superseded the carefree independence which had been the lot of 503 during the days under the French. The personnel of the Section was increased to forty-five men. Captain Greenwood commanded the contingent which left Base Camp on April 25th, and reached Brest after a slow and painful journey in freight cars. Stopping in Brest long enough to repair all the beds of the negro units there, the contingent went aboard the U. S. S. Rhode Island, on May 7th.

Slowly, on the afternoon of May 8th, the shores of France faded away before the thoughtful faces of the soldiers packed on the deck of the battleship. France had been a gay old place; the wine flowed like water, and the smiles of a pretty lass was ever for Americans; yet the thought of home brought a sudden dimming to the eyes of many. Silently bidding farewell to France, they turned their thought to more immediate problems, such as “when do we eat?” and the probability of seasickness.

Life on the Rhode Island was a complex, many-sided problem. In the morning all soldiers were ordered on deck immediately after breakfast, so the details could clean quarters. At ten-thirty they were routed from the upper decks till afternoon mess, while the sailors held drill and inspection. After dinner, back on deck again till a chap was fairly bewildered and hardly knew whether he should be on the upper deck or down on the under deck; whether he should be in the fore of the upper deck or the aft;

## “LEST WE FORGET”

on the port side or the starboard. No chairs were on either decks, the bare, hard floors providing ample room for those desiring to rest their weary bones. A place at the railing was always kept clear for those who suddenly desired to gaze lingeringly into the green depths of the ocean. All during the trip, many a lad could be seen bent over the rail, longing for the bliss of utter oblivion.

Twelve hundred soldiers were on the Rhode Island; twelve hundred hammocks were slung on the under deck of the ship, in two layers. The bottom layer of hammocks was strung from the side of the ship to an iron rail in the center. The top layer was strung lengthwise. The hammocks were so close to each other as to necessitate the men sleeping in opposite direction; that is, the heads and feet alternating. This arrangement had its drawbacks; a chap, perhaps a farmer's lad, would be dreaming of eating a fine meal of pigs feet at home, only to suddenly awaken and find that those "delicious pigs feet" were really only the foot of his neighbor, which had somehow strayed over into the adjacent hammock, and eventually found its way into the unsuspecting mouth. Or, what would happen should a man in an upper hammock suddenly become seasick?

After a few days out the weather became nasty and the sea rough. The Rhode Island pitched and rolled, conducting herself somewhat after the fashion of a flivver. The forward part of the ship was constantly covered by the waves which at times broke as high as the bridge. A library rendered some diversion, and every afternoon a chart was hung on the wall, revealing the distance traveled in twenty-four hours. Sometimes, judging by the chart, the ship had gone backward during the night, which was discouraging to a bunch of homesick lads, and excited not a few unholy remarks.

Early in the morning of May 19th, the soldiers were routed out on deck with packs and rolls made up. As the gray dawn became radiant with the first rays of the sun, tinting the smooth sea with a deep blood red, the mists began to rise. It was a little after eight o'clock when a tall white object was indistinctly perceived. Gradually it took form and a faint outline of hills appeared in the background. Swiftly now, the tall object stood out distinct, a light house, and behind it the shores of Massachusetts appeared. Then the city of Boston came into view. Home at last!

As the Rhode Island neared the harbor, small boats and tugs came out to greet the returning soldiers. Various welfare organizations met the soldiers on the pier with hot coffee and sandwiches. The contingent waited

## “LEST WE FORGET”

on the pier for a time and then boarded a train, bound for Camp Devens. As the train sped through Boston and on through the suburbs, shrill blasts of factory and locomotive whistles cordially cheered the veterans, a sincere manifestation of the kind spirit of the people of Massachusetts.

Section 503 was officially disbanded at Camp Devens, Massachusetts. Clerk Weidler was the only hard-working member of 503 at that camp. Lieutenant Bubb had bidden farewell to the Section just before it left, as casuals, for Camp Dix, New Jersey. The fellows arrived in Camp Dix expecting to be immediately demobilized. Seven days passed before they were mustered out of the Service, to take up once more the life which they had left two years before.

Thusly dissolved a unit of the U. S. Army Ambulance Service, one of the earliest Sections to go into training at Allentown; a unit demobilized at Camp Dix with the record of having served on three of the famous fronts of the World War, and in as many battles, without a single casualty. Section 503 bid farewell to its military career; bid farewell silently and, though not exactly with regret, yet with a consciousness of wistfulness. “La Guerre ces’t finis,” truly; those glorious times, herein recorded, had come to a close; but may sacred memory of them never fade. As says Kipling:

“The tumult and the shouting dies;  
The captains and the kings depart:

\* \* \* \* \*

Lord God of Hosts, be with us yet;  
Lest we forget. Lest we forget.”

### TO MY FLIVVER.

Here's to my pile o' tin,  
Who pulled me around thru thick and thin,  
When the obus were breaking on the road,  
You tout jour got thru with your precious load.  
D'l'eau, essence and a bit of oil,  
A little grease and damn little toil,  
In skidding and sliding you had no beat,  
And bringing down camions was your meat.  
Shell holes were a minor matter  
When you partir with your noisy clatter,  
You were a source of amusement to the "Frogs,"  
But Alors:—you got through Flanders' bogs,  
All thru the night without a light,  
In and out places mighty tight.  
The fighting's o'er and peace in sight,  
Tho my pile of tin you are a sorry plight,  
After beaucoup radiators and wear and tear.  
Ce' ne fait rien, C'est le Guerre.

—Private James R. Brown.



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